

BAT PRELIMINARY ROOST ASSESSMENT (PRA) REPORT

**Garages
Hawk Close & Porritt Street
Bury**



Provided for:

Bury Council

Date: 5th February 2026

Provided by:

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit
Dukinfield Town Hall
King Street
Dukinfield
Tameside

Tel: 0161 342 2250



Summary

Bat Preliminary Roost Assessments (PRA) were carried out to inform proposals to demolish the Rows of garages at Hawk Close and Porritt Street, Bury.

Bats and their roosting sites receive a high level of legal protection under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

An inspection of the garages at both sites was undertaken on 4th February 2026. The Garages were in a state of disrepair, with roofs and doors missing, some heavily vandalised and showing signs of fire damage.

The bat survey consisted of:

- an inspection of the exterior and interior (where possible) of the garages to identify bats or signs of bats and to identify any Potential Roost Features (PRFs);
- an assessment of surrounding habitat for its suitability to support bats; and,
- a desk-top study to identify any previous records of bats associated with the garages.

The survey findings concluded that the blocks of garages had a very low risk of supporting roosting bats.

No bats or signs of bats were found during the inspections, although there are bat records present in the area.

The surrounding habitat is good for bat foraging and commuting.

Other Ecological Considerations

Nesting Birds

The garages have some potential to support nesting birds. All birds and their nests are protected under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). We would therefore recommend that demolition works should not be undertaken in the main bird breeding season (March to August, inclusive). If this is not possible then we would recommend that the garages be inspected by a suitably qualified ecologist prior to demolition

1.1 Reason for survey

The garages at Hawk Close and Porritt Street are to be demolished. Bat activity has previously been recorded in the wider area, however there are no records associated with the garages.

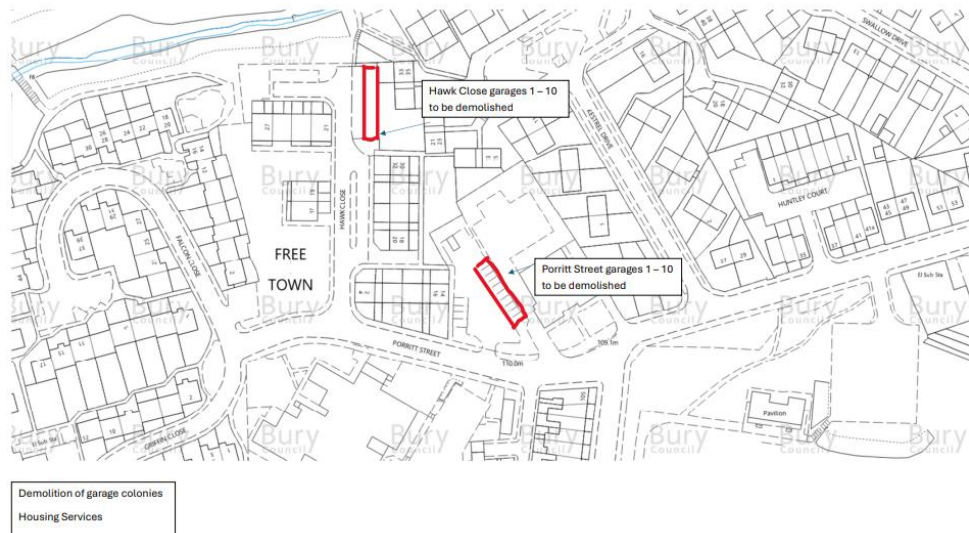


Fig 1 - Location of the garages



Fig 2 – Aerial view of the site

1.2 Legal protection offered to bats

All species of bats found in the UK receive a high level of legal protection under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Amendments) (EU Exit) 2019. In summary, it is an offence –

- To kill, injure or take any wild bat
- To damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place that a wild bat uses for shelter or protection (known as a roost). Since bats are mobile in their habits and can use different places for shelter depending on the time of year this is taken to mean all identified bat roosts, whether bats are present in the roost or not.
- To disturb any wild bat while it is occupying a structure or place used for protection

It is possible to obtain licences for activities affecting bats that would otherwise be in breach of the law. In the case of development works (including building demolition) a licence can be issued under the terms of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Amendments) (EU Exit) 2019.

1.3 Surveying for bats in buildings

Bats often use buildings as roosting sites because they provide a choice of safe, dry places. Buildings can provide a range of potential roost sites, e.g.

- Behind tiles or weatherboarding
- In cavity wall spaces
- In crevices between wall spaces and roofs
- Under soffit boards
- In roof spaces

Bats are mobile in their habits and can occupy a range of different roosting sites depending on the time of year and the stage of their life cycle. The most obvious use of buildings by bats is between May and August when the pregnant females gather in maternity roosts to give birth and raise their young. Although females and young often remain at one roost site all summer, they are sometimes known to move and can change roosting sites if conditions become unsuitable. Although some bats (e.g. brown long-eared bats) occupy the same roosting sites throughout the year, most summer colonies will have dispersed by the autumn. Temporary roost sites can then be occupied in the autumn before bats then move again into hibernation roosts for the winter. Hibernation roosts are often used by single or small numbers of bats and can be very difficult to detect.

Many buildings in areas supporting good feeding habitat can be used as temporary night roosts or feeding perches.

Since bats move roosting sites and can be difficult to detect directly the key identification feature to identify the presence of bats is droppings. Sometimes droppings are found on the outside of buildings. Otherwise, droppings found in loft spaces or around chimneys or gable ends can be typical of bats. Other features used to identify the presence of bats include:

- Characteristic odour
- 'Chittering' by bats, usually in warm summer weather or when bats are active at dusk and are about to leave the roost
- Staining around possible access points

Any survey should include a desk-top survey for any existing records of bats close to the building being inspected and an assessment of the quality of the habitat surrounding the building. Since very many types of building can support bats, one of the best indicators of the possible presence of bats in a building is the presence of good feeding habitat for bats nearby.

It should be noted that the species of bat most commonly associated with buildings in urban areas of Greater Manchester is the pipistrelle and that pipistrelles, in spite of their protected status, remain relatively common in the UK (estimated population is 2.5 million).

2 Aims of the survey

- 2.1** To identify any potential bat roosting features
- 2.2** To ascertain if bats currently use, or have used, the garages for roosting purposes.
- 2.3** To ascertain the likely importance of the garages for bats.
- 2.4** To recommend any further actions required resulting from the survey findings.

3 Methodology

A desk-top survey was undertaken for any existing records of bats within 1km of the site, from the Greater Manchester Local Record Centre.

An assessment was made of the potential of the garages to support bats on 4th February 2026.

The inspections included searching for bats or signs of bats and assessing the general suitability of the garages to support bat roosts. A one million candle power torch was used during the building inspections.

The survey was undertaken by Mady Elford an experienced bat surveyor, who currently holds a Natural England Class 2 bat licence (2015-11597-CLS-CLS) and David Dutton a qualifying member of CIEEM, Ecologist, with many years' of bat surveying experience.

The PRA survey was carried out in line with the recommended methods contained in the Bat Conservation Trust: Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists - Good Practice Guidelines (2023).

3.1 Survey limitations

A common issue on many sites is that the external field signs of bat presence, such as droppings and urine staining may be lost over time due to the weathering and damp conditions; this is a common issue when surveying buildings/garages. It is therefore possible that signs of bats on the exterior of the garages may not have been apparent at time of survey.

Another frequent limitation when surveying buildings is that droppings and other field signs of the presence of crevice dwelling species such as the pipistrelle are often not visible. Droppings often accumulate in hidden areas which may not be found during routine non-invasive surveys. A bat survey cannot therefore hope to provide a definitive 'negative'

result. Rather, results are expressed in terms of the *probability* of a particular planned development affecting bats.

It was not possible to enter all of the garages as they were locked.

3.2 Judgement of potential for bat roosts

Table 1 below was used to both assess potential and to aid decisions about recommendations for example for further surveys and is taken from the BCT guidelines (2023).

Table 1: Guidelines for assessing potential bat roosts

Potential suitability	Description
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats).
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.

4 Results

- 4.1** The results of the desktop search are shown in Appendix A. There are a number of bat records of bat signs or sightings and roosts mostly relating to common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) or *pipistrelle* sp, there is also one record of a whiskered bat and one Soprano pipistrelle bat.
- 4.2** The garages are single storey buildings with flat corrugated roofs and metal doors. The barge boards do not support internal cavities; the cavities lead straight into the garage interior. The garages have holes in the roofs and walls and in some cases no roofs. They will have light ingress, damp and be cold and drafty.

- 4.3 Most of the garages have been vandalised with holes in the walls and roofs, and some were showing signs of fire damage.
- 4.4 The sites are in an urban residential location, however there is good habitat to the north of the sites, providing good bat foraging and commuting habitat.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 The garages were considered to have a very low potential to support roosting bats.
- 5.2 It should also be noted that bats are mobile and cryptic in their habits and can turn up in unlikely locations. All contractors should be reminded of their legal responsibilities regarding bats prior to works commencing. If bats are found at any time, work must stop and advice sought from a suitably qualified person about how best to proceed.

6 Conclusion

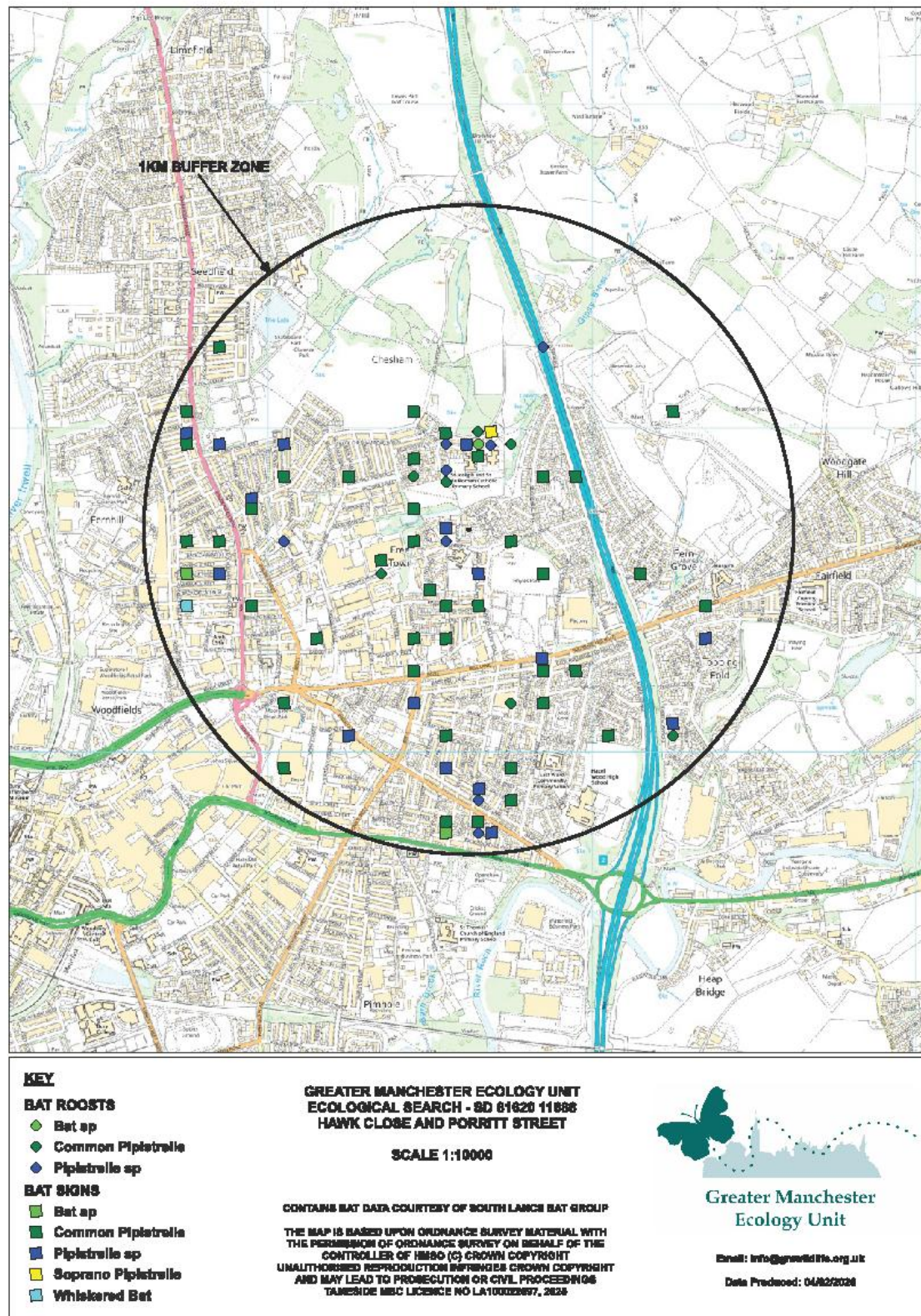
- 6.1 The garages were found to have a very low potential to support roosting bats, and no further survey work for bats was considered to be necessary.
- 6.2 No bats or signs of bats were found during the inspections, although there are bat records present in the area.
- 6.3 The surrounding habitat to the north of the sites was considered to be good for bat foraging and commuting bats. However, there were a number of buildings close by the sites with more potential to support bat usage.

Other Ecological Considerations

Nesting Birds

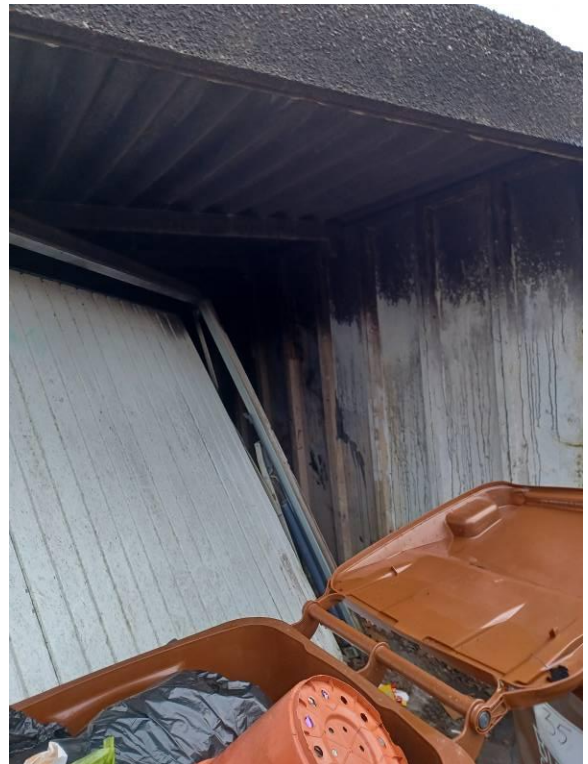
The garages did have some potential to support nesting birds. We would therefore recommend that any demolition works should not be undertaken in the main bird breeding season (March to August, inclusive). If this is not possible then we would recommend that the garages be inspected by a suitably qualified ecologist prior to any works commencing.

APPENDIX A – Desk Top Data Search for Bat Records



APPENDIX B – Photographs

Hawk Close Garages



Porritt Street Garages

Garages – Hawk Close and Porritt Street, Bury



Garages – Hawk Close and Porritt Street, Bury

